

To the Members of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education,

My name is Erik Harrold, the father of 3 young children (ages 4,6 and 8). I am opposed to decreasing the funding to Family Resource Centers across the state as proposed by the Governor in his budget. Family Resource Centers provide invaluable services to the communities they serve. They provide safe places for parents and caregivers to meet and for young children to socialize. They offer preschool to students who might not otherwise be able to afford to attend. They provide before and after school care in a safe environment. The services they offer impact many families in a positive way. Without Family Resource Centers many communities would be left with a void that could not be filled.

My children have attended daytime playgroups, preschool and family-friendly evening activities. The preschool has prepared our children well for the transition to Kindergarten, and created the foundation for life-long learners. Because the FRC is located in our elementary school, my children are already familiar with and have had positive experiences with the school. They also have the option of services provided from the school. My youngest is finishing up preschool (our 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year) and receives speech therapy through the school. This is a result of screenings the FRC offers. Our FRC also strengthens the school community by offering fun, family friendly evening activities that are well attended. This helps families feel comfortable being a participating member of the school community.

My concerns about under-funding Family Resource Centers are the negative impact to communities, many of which are facing funding cuts to education under the Governor's proposed budget. We live in Tolland, CT. Our community would be heavily impacted by the loss of our Family Resource Center. Particularly the families who use the Before & After school care. There are simply not enough resources for before & after school care here. Without our FRC, many families would be left scrambling to find safe care for their children. Also, without the screenings they offer, more children would be left starting school at a disadvantage. It is well researched that early intervention is successful.

Family Resource Centers should be fully funded, to continue to provide their communities with the invaluable services they offer. The money could easily be found in the \$250 million being proposed to renovate the XL Center. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Erik Harrold  
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